

Notes on 203 N Blount St Proposal from Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood Assoc. Development Chair

10 December 2025

Bob Klebba, TLNA Development Chair

We had a neighborhood meeting on 8 December 2025 to review the proposed changes to the Planned Development at 203 N Blount. The 16-unit proposal sits on the same footprint as that for the 8-unit proposal approved in 2017. However, the new proposal elevations are about 25-30% larger and taller due to the addition of a 4th story.

While the zoning for the site is PD, the site is located in the Transit-Oriented Development Overlay District, which allows 4-story, 16-unit structures by right. The TOD OD covers all of the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood (except curiously one lot next to Tenney Beach, which is just far enough from a bus station). The City's Missing Middle, TOD, and Housing Forward initiatives over the past few years have made larger residential developments easier to build without community input. (A map of the TOD OD can be seen here: <https://data-cityofmadison.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/cityofmadison::transit-oriented-development-overlay-zoning-district-boundary/explore?location=43.093972%2C-89.363140%2C12.64>)

The developer's presentation was confusing on some details. The front roof shown was different from that approved at Urban Design Commission. The developer mentioned that they want to remove the stairs leading to the 1st floor apartments and change some other features that were in the original submission. The Plan Commission will review the proposal approved by UDC on 15 December. PC will not be reviewing plans showing the changes that were suggested at our neighborhood meeting, although they can make these changes. The proposal approved by UDC can be found here:

<https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7517842&GUID=713553BC-A89A-4785-A479-419094A70C1A&Options=ID|Text|&Search=blount>

Comments from attendees and received by email

- 16 units is appropriate for location near transit and downtown
- Proposal promotes density
- Encouraging to see site of demolished house proposed to be developed after 7 years.
- Some 2-bedroom units would be more family friendly, living with roommates is more affordable
- Larger proposal is too massive, better articulation could reduce massing

- Too massive for historic structures across N Blount: Hill Grocery, City Horse Barn
- Gable roofs over front porches help to reduce massing (gables approved by UDC)
- 6-story Das Kronenberg/Badger Shoe Factory across E Dayton provides positive perspective on massing
- Window and door sizes are incoherent and could be tweaked to significantly improve design
- Changes in siding colors are distracting
- Stairs leading to 1st floor apartments are distracting and block light to ground floor apartments
- No additional on-site parking is good
- Do residents qualify for RP3 permits? If allowed in original PD, for 8 units only?
- Concern about sufficient storm water management given its very low elevation on the isthmus.
- Diversity of housing and architectural styles is important for Tenney-Lapham
- Design of proposal does not match that of 1920s style predominantly found adjacent to site and in rest of neighborhood
- No affordable housing

Unfortunately, our neighborhood meeting occurred after UDC's review. UDC does pay attention to community input from neighborhood and steering committee meetings. But we can't say how UDC would have requested any changes based on our neighborhood meeting.